



# WOHLSEN

CONSTRUCTION

## Allegro Harrington Park Case Study

Set on a spectacular waterfront property, Allegro at Harrington Park provides residents with water views on three sides and lush, wooded surroundings in northern New Jersey. The luxury building features bright, modern interiors and expansive amenities, including a resort-style pool, full-service spa, fitness center, greenhouse, art studio, movie theater, fireside lounge, and inviting spaces to gather indoors and out.

The completed, nine-acre, 232,000-square-foot, 177-unit development is exquisite. Despite the fact that it was built during a pandemic and amid demanding site conditions, it shows no signs of the challenges the project team had to overcome.



### Site problems and a pandemic

"This was a very large, fast-paced, exciting project from beginning to end that included several big challenges," said Michael Courtney, Senior Project Manager at Wohlsen Construction. "A lot of site conditions threatened to delay work so we had to deal with them on the fly in order to maintain the schedule."

Early in the project, a geotechnical engineer determined that soil onsite was unsuitable for load-bearing applications. Further investigation concluded that Wohlsen would need to remove and replace soil to a depth of three feet below footing bearings. To compound the problem, the existing soil did not meet New Jersey Residential Clean Disposal requirements and would have to be stockpiled and tested before it could be hauled offsite.

"Wohlsen was confronted with a very bad soils problem on this job that put millions of dollars at stake," said John LeFauve, Vice President of Construction with Allegro Senior Living. "This was a massive problem and they wrapped their arms around it. They kept leaning into the problem and finding solutions."





Correcting the soils problem complicated other aspects of construction. Most notably, power, water, and wastewater utilities could not be completed on time while soil work continued. Wohlsen adjusted schedules and order of work and prepared for intensive operations to compensate for “a lot of utilities being completed on the far end of the project timeline,” Courtney said.

Other site conditions and mid-project discoveries further complicated construction.

The development plan called for the demolition of a former water utility office building on the property. Inspectors, however, discovered asbestos in the building, necessitating remediation and creating a potential 40-day delay in construction. To compensate, Wohlsen drastically re-sequenced site work. That included reversing the direction of work across the site, reconfiguring site logistics, modifying a retaining wall design to support the revised plans, and, all the while, protecting a sensitive riparian zone around the property’s edge.

The COVID-19 pandemic also began mid-construction. Wohlsen instituted rigorous protocols for health screenings, distancing workers, and site cleaning. When coronavirus exposure required some team members to remain offsite, Wohlsen brought in professionals from other regions and instituted a system of virtual collaboration to ensure work could continue apace without any loss of project-specific expertise.

### The power of teamwork

“The best thing about working with Wohlsen was the team, the team, the team,” LeFauve said. “Wohlsen put together a high-performing team and they worked as hard as they could every day to create a good day for us and our project.”

LeFauve recalled walking the site with a Wohlsen superintendent during construction. Regardless of recent challenges or revised construction plans, the superintendent could always explain what was happening with each component of construction and Wohlsen’s plans to remedy issues.

“Wohlsen does a very good job at collaborating on any potential impacts on a project – design impacts, site impacts, COVID impacts. We work very hard to anticipate possible impacts so there are no surprises to our clients,” Courtney said. For example, when the pandemic began Wohlsen created a detailed assessment of how it could impact the project schedule. “Based on that estimate, the client was able to plan their finances and operations.”

**“The best thing about working with Wohlsen was the team, the team, the team.”**

Best building practices – including a six-month BIM process to fine tune mechanical and electrical design, and creation of mock-ups to determine best ways to meet design specifications and quality standards – facilitated efficient construction and excellent results.

In addition to ongoing communication with all project team members, Wohlsen filed weekly reports with Allegro that provided a concise update about work completed, ongoing work, critical issues, latest changes/remedies, and “a smattering of good pictures of the progress and key moments. That got people excited about the job,” LeFauve said. “Every Monday morning, people would see that this job is moving forward and Wohlsen has all the issues on their radar. So when problems surfaced, we could say, ‘Don’t worry, Wohlsen will handle it. They’re problem solvers.’ The big dogs around the table would nod and agree. That’s why Wohlsen will be the contractor to beat on our next project.”

Allegro President Richard Miller echoed that sentiment when Allegro at Harrington Park received its Certificate of Occupancy: “We are a raving fan because everyone on the Wohlsen team has delivered on the Wohlsen promise.”